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Gender Issues in *the Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka: A Linguistics-Oriented Analysis from a Systemic Functional Grammar and Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective

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Abstract: The term gender is relatively new in such disciplines as Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Sociolinguistics, let alone with Literary Linguistics. As opposed to sex which refers to biological characteristics, gender is culture based. Nowadays, it is actively recommended to include aspects of gender in whatever project we undertake. The present article is an attempt at probing the language used by male and female characters in *Soyinka*'s *The Lion and the Jewel* to see how gender issues are grounded in the play to let it play its didactic role. The aim is to pinpoint the way female and male are represented through a lexicogramatical analysis with a special focus on its transitivity system as suggested by Halliday (1994) to enter Wole Soyinka's characters' inner and outer world as they use language to enable them 'to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them' (1994:106). That Soyinka considers or does not consider women or just recounts the situation of women in Yoruba traditional societies is what is at stake in this study. The results of the investigation in the light of transitivity and Critical Discourse Analysis shows that Soyinka, consciously or unconsciously has represented male characters as strong, powerful and metaphorically as a lion, a symbol of irresistible power. They are also portrayed as initiator, doer of something, and commander in chief, the king while their female counterparts (Sidi, Sadikou) are represented as goals and/or beneficiaries of men's actions and associated with processes of sensing and of emotion.

Keywords: Gender, Power, Transitivity, Systemic Functional Linguistic, Critical Discourse Analysis

1. Introduction

In the current context of social change in which men and women's social roles are being deconstructed and women are now taking up positions in public space (politics, administration, workplace, etc.), it is of practical use to question some literary works so far considered as masterpiece in some of the aspects of social realities they deal with. That is why we have chosen through this article to read *Soyinka*'s *The Lion and the Jewel* (first published in 1963) between the lines so as to explore gender issues.

Moreover, the idea that 'a work of art, consciously or not, reveals and is determined by both the writer's view and the socio-historical development of its time, so much so that even those writers who apparently invent their own literary terms still deal with pressing contemporary issues' (Koussouhon 2011:16) has prompted in this study our questioning of

language use in *The Lion and the Jewel* by *Soyinka* on which so much has been said/written ever since it was published in 1963.

Also, in the last section of *Sara Zargar*'s article ('Traces of Afrocentricity in *The Lion and the Jewel* and *The Road* by Wole Soyinka') entitled 'Suggestions for Further Research' one can read the following sentences:

Wole *Soyinka*'s works can also be criticized from a feminist view; in *The Lion and the Jewel*, women are really considered the second sex, essentially created for serving men, and in *The Road* there is no female character at all. On the other hand, Euba claims that when women appear in Soyinka's works they appear in a dramatized womanhood, because they are manifestations of the Yoruba goddesses Oya, Yemoja, and Oshun, which represent beauty, love, sensual power, etc (450).

In actual fact, *Zargar* after unveiling traces of afrocentricity in the play, at the end of his analysis, is now suggesting other possible angles under which a linguist/literary analyst can

proceed on to view *Soyinka*'s fiction. We take this remark for granted and posit that *The Lion and the Jewel* cannot only be considered about representation of African customs and traditions in some of their aspects and the influence of the modern world on Africans, but also about gender.

Epistemologically, we are more aware than ever before that there is always a room for constant questioning and discussion of literary works whenever it is possible to come out with useful findings that could help understand social realities. In fact, if a literary work can be seen as works of women/men who are specifically sensitive to the language of their time, its social and cultural embodiments, and who use the skill of language to make their vision of life permanent, then any attempt to critically appreciate aspects of female and male representations in works by the iconic figure of African literature will be of useful interests and very fascinating.

In his well acclaimed play, *Soyinka* portrays a post-colonial Africa in which modernity and tradition are in constant rivalry. In so doing, he creates characters who challenge themselves in an atmosphere punctuated with dances, songs, with defenders of modernity in one camp (Lakunle) and those who are strongly rooted in traditions and customs on the other side. But still, the way Soyinka has represented women makes them male-dominated creatures and/or creatures to whom things are done (goals and beneficiaries).

The aim is to have a critical look at the character's idiolect viz the way language is used by male and female characters through a lexicogrammatical (transitivity patterns) analysis in order to pinpoint in one way or another the ideological positioning of *Soyinka* towards gender issues, at least, as it is construed in *The Lion and the Jewel*. In this article, we consider the writer's idiolect analysis as a tool to assess his ideological positioning towards a particular issue.

1.1. Summary of the Plot

The Lion and the Jewel is a play of the well-known Nigeria playwright and novelist *Wole Soyinka* published in 1963. It is about a young beautiful girl, *Sidi*, over whom two men are fighting in order to win her heart. The first one, *Lakunle*, symbolizes modernity and western culture. The second, *Baroka*, the village chief, symbolizes tradition and *Yoruba*'s culture. Both will play all tricks to convince *Sidi* to accept their project of marriage but it is *Baroka* who wins and marries her at the end.

It is in fact a three-act comedy: morning, noon, and night, punctuated with dances, songs and mimes. The play opens with *Sidi* and *Lakunle* where *Lakunle*, in his attempt to confess his love to *Sidi*, resorts to a terrible mouth playing game. *Lakunle* is pleased with his education and academic achievement and actively uses this advantage to corner *Sidi* to his side. But *Sidi*, strongly rooted in the tradition, asserts that he must pay the dowry before any marriage could be possible. *Lakunle* rejects this idea and qualifies it as barbaric, uncivilized, outdated, etc. *Baroka* on the other side, with the help of his elder wife, *Sadikou*, uses all sorts of flatteries, sweet words, and the lie that he has lost his manhood to get *Sidi* in his trap.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

The approach that informs our analysis of gender issues in *Wole Soyinka*'s play is that of Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1985, 1994, 2004; Eggins, 1994, 2004; Fontaine, 2013) in its stratum of lexicogrammar labeled transitivity. Halliday (1976) [As cited in Fontaine (2013)] extends this conception to the participants involved in the realization of the processes ascribed to the verbal item: 'transitivity is the grammar of processes…and the participants in these processes, and the attendant circumstances' (p.73).

Transitivity analysis has been identified by many scholars (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1999); Koussouhon, 2011; Koukpossi, 2009; Fontaine, 2013; Koutchadé, 2013; Dossoumou, 2013; Allagbé, 2013; Akogbeto, 2010) as an effective tool available for researchers whenever they want to analyze the content of a message as it is presented by a writer/character. Our choice to carry out the lexicogrammatical analysis, as suggested by Gallardo (2006), is to relate the language used by *Lakunle*, *Baroka*, *Sidi* and *Sadikou* to their inner/outer world and what these representations convey concerning gender.

Furthermore, the study considers the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA thereafter) for useful interests as it offers the possibility of discussion in a holistic way that goes beyond a mere analysis of single clauses considered as the unit of analysis in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL thereafter). Thus, it will allow us to analyze the paradigm of power as it is concentrated in male characters' hands at the expense of the female ones.

2. Literature Review

This work founds it roots in the intrinsic role that characters play in the unfolding story of a literary fiction viz in plays. The American author, *William Faulkner* quoted in Hoessou-Adin (2011) proves it well when he says:

[The story] begins with a character, usually, and once he stands up on his feet and begins to move, all I do is trot along behind him with a paper and a pencil trying to keep up long enough to put down what he says and does (p.63).

One could conclude that it is possible to get into the characters' inner/outer world by analyzing what they say or do thereof. In so doing, it is to adopt the *Whorfian hypothesis* about language. This hypothesis states that "one's thoughts about the real world are influenced by and influence one's language" [as cited in Vagas (2010)].

In other words, humans construct reality using thoughts and express these thoughts through language. Halliday is, among others, the linguist who has theorised a lot about this issue. His experiential meaning depicted in texts through the transitivity analysis posits that people will make a particular linguistic choice according to the way they conceive the world.

Of course, many articles/books have been devoted to pinpoint gender issues in works of fiction or in specialized discourses. Many have also dealt with gender issues and female representation in *Soyinka*'s *The Lion and the Jewel*

(Olajide, 2006). But not many from a linguistics-oriented framework, let alone with Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis. Yet, some are of core importance as regards the depth of their analysis. However, it is important to review them in the course of the current work. A quick glance at the content of the existing works in that perspective shows that different approaches have been adopted in their attempt to underscore elements related to women's identity in the society. Three works that have adopted the same perspective as the one put forward in the current study are worth reviewing.The first and the second one is developed in the framework of SFL and the third one within that of CDA.

Barbara Cristina Gallardo (2006) has presented part of her doctoral thesis in the article entitled '*Analysis of a literary work using Systemic-Functional Grammar*'. Ignited by Cameron (1995)'s remark that *Pygmalion* (the play she has studied) can also be classified as one about gender, her work focuses on examining the language used by the main male character (Henry Higgins) and female character (Eliza Doolittle) in that play by Bernard Shaw (1913) through a transitivity analysis. The results of this work shows that the playwright portrays the male character as a strong creature with rational matters, while the female character represented a woman as being more concerned with the emotional side in their relationships.

Still in the framework of gender studies mainly in literary linguistics, the work by Koussouhon & Dossoumou (2015) entitled "*Exploring ideational metafunction in Helon Habila's Oil on Water: A re-evaluation and redefinition of African women's personality and identity through literature*" is also for useful interest for the present study as regards the methodological approach adopted and the different conclusions they arrived at. The analyses have proved that *Helon Habila*, unlike other male writers, is aware of the burning issue of the gender approach so much so that he actively creates in his artwork a gender-balanced universe wherein physical, concrete, and tangible actions are performed by social actors that include male and female equally.

In the same context, Izabel Magalhães (2005) in her article entitled 'Interdiscursivity, gender identity, and the politics of literacy in Brasil' which represents her contribution to *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Gender Power and Ideology* (Lazard, M., (ed.), has analysed women identities as they are represented in three different genres: newsletters (covering aspects such as editorials, opinions, life stories, interviews, religion-based text, poetry, jokes and messages) advertisements, and interviews. She has come to invaluable findings that are, by and large, similar to those found in our analysis of *The Lion and the Jewel* though it is a literary fiction. In exploring those three (03) genres in the light of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, she observes four women identities. She has noticed that women and men take part equally in text production. Those texts represent women as workers and writers. In class discussion (Adult Literacy Programme in Brasil) and in interviews with learners of

Catholic Church University, women are seen having the traditional identities as mother/housewives. In advertisement, she sees a global discourse that constructs women's representation as 'bodies with a market price' (p.197).

As regards the above-mentioned women identities, Magalhães (2005) suggests that 'for women to be valued as citizens with the right to a position in political life, they must have their own social place and their own voice in public domain, which have both prestige and power' (ibid.).

Eventually, in revising recent annals of literature, some other remarkable studies have been conducted in SFL, Rhetoric and CDA to lexicogrammatically and semantically dissect various texts and discourses in much different vein and to discern multiple tools exploited by orators and authors in political, scientific, religious etc. texts to make the texts persuasive, significant, and appealing and obscure as well (Nur, 2012; Kazemian et al, 2013; Kazemian & Hashemi, 2013, 2014a, b; Noor, et al., 2015 a, b).

3. Data Analysis

In SFL tradition, clauses are seen to convey three (03) types of meanings simultaneously including the way people internalize their experience through language, the way people interact through language and the way clauses are organised as a message. In order to reach the objective put forward, the current work considers the first type of meaning, the experiential meaning, so as to pinpoint how gender issues are developed in *Soyinka*'s play. The version of the play that we used for the analysis is the one printed by *Mosuro Edition* in 2001 in Ibadan, Nigeria.

The analysis considers the whole play from the opening to the end by focusing on some dialogues between *Lakunle*, *Sidi*, *Baroka*, and *Sadikou*. Each move of the dialogues is selected for the processes they contain and for the contribution they bring to portray realities concerning gender issues.

Experiential meaning at the grammatical rank of clause is reflected in the processes, the participants involved in their realisation, and the circumstances of their occurrences. This is called *transitivity system*. Halliday (1994) identified six processes for the representation of this kind of meaning: the *material*, *mental*, *verbal*, *behavioural*, *relational*, and *existential* processes. In the process, only three of them (material, mental and relational) will be taken into account in the present work because they are the most important processes that can help carry out the analysis of gender.

3.1. Material Processes

Material processes are processes of doing and happening. In the framework of SFL, a clause which reflects material process can be read as the answer to the question 'What does x do?' where *do* represents a concrete and tangible action and x the actor, the one who is doing something. The material process involves an obligatory participant, the actor, and other participants, the goal and/or a beneficiary that can be a recipient (one that a good is given) or a client (one that a service is offered) (Halliday, 2004; Kazemian, et al., 2014). In

the following clause '*my love will open your mind*', the noun phrase *my love* is the actor, the process *will open* and the goal *your mind.*

Coming back to the issue of gender, we can consider that the participant roles are played by *Lakunle*, *Baroka*, *Sidi* and *Sadikou* in which the first two are represented as actors, doing something tangible and *Sidi* and *Sadikou*, most of the time as characters who are the goals or the beneficiaries of those actions performed by the male characters. Let's consider the following examples:

1) Lakunle: Sidi, a man *must prepare to fight* alone (p. 6).
Lakunle: Sidi, my love *will open* your mind (p.6).
Lakunle: Do you call it nonsense that I *poured* the waters of my soul *to wash* your feet (p. 6).
Lakunle : I want *to walk* beside you in the street (p.8).
Lakunle: I *kissed* you as all educated women (p.8).
Lakunle: I will *teach* you the waltz (p.9).
Lakunle: Oh I *must show* you the grandeur of towns (p.9)
Sidi: Every time, your action *deceives* me making me think that you merely wish to whisper something in my ear (p.9).
Sidi: This strange unhealthy mouthing you *perform* (p .9).
Lakunle: We'*ll buy* saucepans for all the women (p.37).

Lakunle, as it can be seen, is the actor of most of the actions expressed by the material processes and *Sidi* is the goal and/or the beneficiary. Most of the material processes are strict actions directed towards *Sidi*.

All in all, though *Lakunle* in this opening scene is dealing with love affairs in his attempt to conquer the heart of *Sidi*, he still uses processes totally detached from feeling. On the other hand, the actions taken by *Sidi* are not the straight and direct ones which can bring about changes. They are rather actions designated to avoid men's tricks and behaviour, a kind of escape and self-protection against men's preposterousness. Let's consider the following responding moves of *Sidi* to *Lakunle*'s mouth playing games:

2) Sidi: I'v*e done* the fold so high and so tight, I can hardly breathe (p. 3).
Sidi: I *have to leave* my arms so I *can use* them (p. 3).
Sidi: *Give* me the pail (p.4).
Sidi: *Shall* I *take* the pail? (p.5)
Sidi: …that I *was forced* to sell my shame and marry you without a price (p. 7)
Sidi *bursts* out laughing (p.9).
Sidi: Why should I… I *would demean* my worth *to wed* a mere village school teacher.

In the processes realized by the verbal items *take*, *burst out laughing* (behavioral process), *demean*, *have done*, *leave*, etc. *Lakunle* is not the goal nor is he the beneficiary. The actions are not directed towards him. The only instance of material process in which *Lakunle* is the goal concerns marriage:

3) Sidi: …that I was forced to sell my shame and *marry you*

without a price (p. 7)

In this opening scene entitled *morning*, the analysis has shown how each character, viz. *Lakunle* and *Sidi*, has used material processes, processes of tangible actions to express their representation of the world. It can be seen that men are presented as more active and dynamic than women. All men's actions are directed to women who are the goals or/and the beneficiaries.

In the same vein, *Baroka*'s choices of processes in his exchanges with *Sidi*, *Sadikou* and his other wives portray a man of authority and/of action most directed towards *Sidi*, *Sadikou*, and other characters. This is exemplified in the following utterances in which *Baroka* appears:

4) Sadikou: Baroka swears *to take* no other wife after you
Sidi: Baroka merely *seeks to raise* his manhood above my beauty (p. 21).
Baroka: Did I not at the festival of rain, *defeat* the men in the log-tossing match? (p.28)
Baroka: Do I not still with the most fearless ones, *hunt* the leopard and the boa at night (p. 28).
Baroka: I also *change* my wife when I *have learnt to tire* them (p.43).

All the material process identified in the above utterances can be read as presenting *Baroka* in a dominating position, the beneficiaries of his actions (*swear* to take, *raise* his manhood) being *Sidi* and *Sadikou*. He even boasted professing his invincibility in the objective that both women will be influenced which is, to some extent, a selfish attitude.

Another striking observation that is worth mentioning here is the use of material processes of *make*, *do*, and *teach* by both male characters. The material process *teach* identifies *Baroka* and *Lakunle* as professors. Croates (1995) quoted in Gallardo (2006) presents this process as ascribed to '*the talk that takes place between professional and client*'. This kind of language, he contends, is used in the public domain and that this encounter between professor and students is asymmetrical and helps to keep and build power relation. In the following examples, *Lakunle* and *Baroka* are the professors and *Sidi* and *Sadikou* the students:

5) Lakunle: I *will teach* you the Waltz (p. 9).
Lakunle:I *must show* you the grandeur of towns (p. 9).
Sidi: The school-man here *has taught* me certain things (p. 21).
Favourite: Do I *improve* my lord? (p. 26).
Baroka: *Be* sharp and sweet (p. 26).
Baroka: And would she, had I the briefest chance to *teach* this unfledged birdling that lacks the wisdom to embrace the mustiness of age (p.28).
Lakunle: And I shall start by *teaching* you (p.37).
Lakunle: From now you shall *attend* my school (p.37).

The transitivity analysis of the clauses above shows processes of teaching: *teach*, *show*, *improve*, and *be* (existential process) in which *Lakunle* and *Baroka* appear as the actors and the professionals on the one hand and *Sidi*, *Sadikou*, and the *Favourite* on the other hand. The question of the *Favourite* to *Baroka* by using the process *improve* can be read as a typical question of a student who wants to learn more.

The use of the above-mentioned material processes along others (*make*, *do*) is a symbol of men's occupation of the public space where men are positioned as professional, and women as learners.

A quick analysis of how the processes 'make', and 'do' are used in the play reveals important findings. Wherever these processes are used and *Lakunle* and *Baroka* are actors, those processes express a kind of control, transformation, and domination over/of the female gender according to their projects. But whenever women are actors, it is to express the sexual influence they have over the male. The following is an example of how the process 'make' is used:

6) Sidi: will you *make* me a laughing-stock? (p.7)
Baroka: But remember, I only *make* a pleading for this prey of women's malice (p.45).

The process *do* is translated into processes like *killed*, *ate up*, *consume*, *spin*, *stand*, etc. as it is found in the following monologue by Sadikou:

…I *did* for him, I, the youngest and freshest of the wives. I *killed* him with all my strength. I called him and he came at me, but no, for him, this was not like other times. I, Sadikou was I not the flame itself and he the flax on old women's spindle? I *ate* him up! Race of mighty lions, we always *consume* you, at our pleasure we *spin* you, at our whim we *make* you dance… (p. 32).

Or by restricting women's ability and competences to only making men suffer or offend them:

7) Baroka: What more *could* women *do*? (p.39)

That the play characterizes women as object of male character's attention is evident. All in all, women in *The Lion and the Jewel* do not take initiative, they undergo it. Men take it. They are the doers of the actions. Most of their actions are designed to occupy the public space (teacher and chief). They act overtly. Most of the time, whenever men are actors, the female are the goal and/ or the beneficiary. But when it comes that women take action, it is the negative aspects of it that are shown like in the following reply of Lakunle to Sadiku:

8) And now because you'*ve sucked* him dry (p.38).

3.2. Mental Processes

Mental processes are now to be analyzed in the process of the current study on gender issues in *The Lion and the Jewel*. We analyse those processes to show the power relationship, the asymmetrical relationship between male and female characters from the premises that as one feels, thinks, conceives and perceives things, so he/she is classified as dominated or dominator in the social and political arena.

Mental processes are, in fact in the words of Halliday (Halliday, 2004), processes of cognition (think, understand, etc.) perception (see, hear, taste, etc.) and affection (love, like, hate, etc.). Unlike the material processes, these imply necessarily two participants: the Senser, which must be a conscious being, and the phenomenon. For example in the clause '*I wonder that they let you run the school*', 'I' realizes the Senser, '*that they let you run the school*' realizes the Phenomenon, the thing that is sensed.

The following are instances of mental processes as they are used by characters (Lakunle, Sidi, Baroka, and Sadikou) to enable them to express their opinions, thoughts, and feelings about the roles that they embody in the play.

9) Lakunle: If now I *am misunderstood* by you and your race of savages (p. 3).
Sidi: Again! I'*d like to know* just what gives you these thoughts of manly conceit (p. 4).
Lakunle: But don't you *worry* (p.4).
Sidi: Well go there. Go to these places where women *would understand* you (p.5).
Lakunle: Ignorant girl, can you not *understand*? (p.8)
Sidi: Every time, your action deceives me making me *think* that you merely *wish* to whisper something in my ear (p.9).
Sidi: Away with you. The village says you're mad, and I begin *to understand*. I *wonder* that they let you run the school (p. 10).
Sidi: I *will want* to wed you (p. 12).
Sidi: I *know*. Let us dance the dance of the lost traveler (p. 13).
Sidi: *Have* you *seen* these? *Have* you *seen* these images of me… (p.19).
Sidi: The tale of Baroka's little suppers, I *know* all (p. 23).
Sadikou: you *must not believe* everything you hear (p.23).
Sidi: I *love* hearsays. Lakunle, tell me all (p.24).
Baroka: Tonight, I *hope* to take another wife (p. 27).
Sadikou: my lord, I *do not understand* (p. 29).
Baroka: I *had hoped* my words were harsh enough
Barika: For the gross abuse I *suffered* from one I called my favourite (p.39).
Lakunle: If you *care* one little bit for what I feel (p. 35).
Sidi: I *hope* the Bale will not think of me. (p.41)
Baroka: Oh. Oh. I *see* you dip your hand in the pocket of the school teacher (p. 50).

The analysis at this level reveals two things:
1-female characters overuse mental processes
2-female characters when they use mental processes express their worries and feelings, and thoughts about the male characters while the male ones express their thoughts and feelings about practical matters.

3.3. Relational Processes

Critical discourse analysts find in relational processes the linchpin of an ideological construing of meanings in texts as text producers actively link forms and functions of the language to describe the vision that they have of the world. So, relational processes are useful tools to decipher ideology in a given text. Butt et al (2000) calls them '*the power house of semiosi*s [quoted in Haig (2009)]. Halliday (1994) describes relational processes as processes of '*being*'. Entities are related to one another in order to underscore the relationship that exists between them.

The attempt in the following is to illustrate how ideology has been realized by the actors of the play in their use of relational processes. In fact, there is a sort of patriarchal ideology as it will be demonstrated thereafter in *Lakunle* and *Baroka*'s choices of relational processes to describe female characters and therefore the picture of how male and female

are represented by *Soyinka* in the play. But before we proceed on with the analysis and discussion, it is important at this level to highlight the relational process system as suggested by Halliday (1994, 2004).

Table 1. The relational process system.
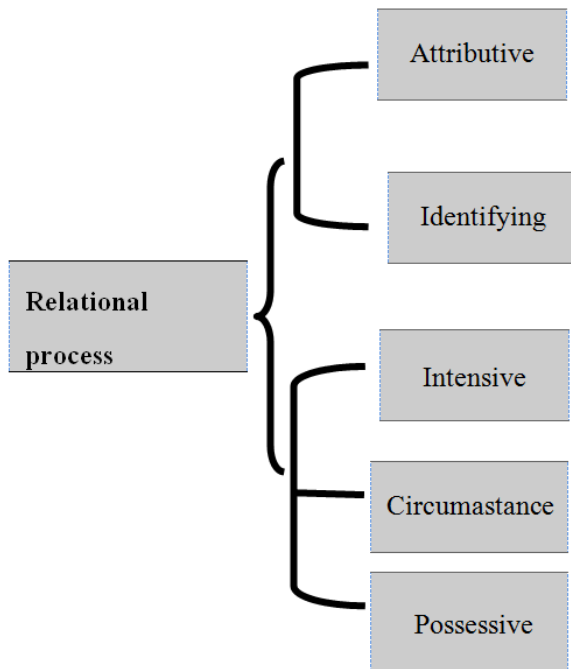
In the above represented system, the curly bracket should be read as the logical connective 'and'. Therefore, any entrance into the system should take into account both terms in order to be right. The square brackets translate the choice which must be made between the mentioned terms (either intensive, circumstantial, or possessive). So, a relational process according to the system can be qualified to be attributive or identifying and only one choice between intensive, circumstantial, and possessive will be made in addition. Let's consider the following excerpts from the play:

10) Lakunle: *Have* you no shame (p.2)

Lakunle: But you *are* as stubborn as an illiterate goat (p.2).

Lakunle: You'd *be* my chattel, my mere property.

Lakunle: Romance *is* the sweetening of the soul (p. 10).

Third girl: Yes, yes, he did, But the Bale is still feasting his eyes on the images. Oh Sidi, he *was* right. You *are* beautiful (p. 11).

Sidi: If that *is* true, then I am more esteemed than Bale Baroka the lion of Ilujinle. This means that I *am* greater than the fox of the undergrowth (p.11).

Sidi: Sidi *is* more important than the Bale (p.12).

Sidi: He seeks new fame as one man who *has possessed* the jewel of Ilujinle (p. 21).

Sidi: I suddenly *am* glad to be a woman (p. 33).

Lakunle to Sadikou: For though you *are* nearly seventy, your mind *is* simple and unformed (p.37).

The first aspect of the characters' use of relational processes is how each constructs meaning to describe himself/herself in relation to others. *Lakunle* will be the first character to be analyzed in this perspective.

Indeed, *Lakunle* is one of the major actors in the play. In his attempt to win the heart of *Sidi*, the *Ilujinle*'s most celebrated beauty, he resorts to all sorts of rhetorical strategies to convince her. A close analysis of how he uses language shows that he is more privileged than *Sidi* and *Sadikou*, his female counterparts in the play. He is described as intelligent, modern, and wise:

11) A prophet has honour except in his own home.

Wise men have been called mad before me, and after,
   many more shall be so abused (p. 5).

Who else could represent the prophet and the wise man in the foregoing quote? *Lakunle*, while positioning himself as an illuminated man, takes a terrible stance towards *Sidi* and *Sadikou* and the villagers. Evidence of this can be seen through the attributes he uses to describe them.

12) a. Lakunle: A natural feeling, arising out of envy;

For, as a woman you *have* a smaller brain than mine (p. 4).

b. Lakunle: The scientists have proved it. It *is* in my books.

Women *have* a smaller brain than men (p. 4).

c. Lakunle: That's why they are called the weaker sex
(p.4).

d.) Lakunle: you *are* an ignorant girl, can you not understand? (p. 8).

e. Lakunle: Bush-girl you *are*, bush-girl you'll always *be*; uncivilized and primitive-bush girl! (p.9).

f. Lakunle: A savage custom, barbaric, out dated, rejected, denounced, accused, excommunicated, archaic, degrading, humiliating, unspeakable,

redundant. Regressive, remarkable, unpalatable (p.7).

As it can be seen, *Lakunle* uses some possessive attributes ((12a) *a smaller brain than mine,* (12b) *a smaller brain than men,*) intensive attributes ((12f) *Ignorant girl, bush-girl, uncivilized and primitive-bush girl*) to describe *Sidi* and how he conceives women in general, and a huge list of intensive attributes to describe his people's culture (*a savage custom, barbaric, out dated, rejected, denounced, accused, excommunicated, archaic, degrading, humiliating, unspeakable, redundant. Regressive, remarkable, unpalatable).* It is evident that *Lakunle* derides women and his own culture.

Sidi is not the only one character to undergo *Lakunle*'s degradation. *Sadikou* is also one of his victims. The following instance is quite telling:

13) Lakunle: For though you are nearly seventy, your mind *is* simple and unformed (p.37).

In the same vein, *Baroka* does not consider women otherwise. Let's consider the following two utterances by *Baroka*:

14) a. Baroka: Not even Ailatou, my favourite? *Was* she not at her usual place, beside my door?

b. Baroka: Sidi *is* the eye's delight, but she *is* vain, and her head *is* feather-light, and always giddy with a trival thought (p. 49).

That *Baroka* derides women and considers them as his subordinate is an open secret in the play but this can go beyond human understanding. In (14b), the relational clause,

the intensive relational process 'is' with the attributes *eye's delight, vain, feather-light, giddy with trival thought* in which *Sidi* is the carrier shows at length how far he could go to describe women by playing on their intelligence and by considering them as an exoteric object (eye's delight) and unable to think for better. In (14a), the *Favourite* (Baroka's latest wife) is the token and the circumstance *at her usual place, beside my door* is the value. This can be read as an expression of *Baroka*'s authority and dominating power over his wife since the later should be present whenever the Chief is there at a prescribed place (beside his door).

How *Baroka* and *Lakunle* treat their female counterparts is quite telling of how they perceive themselves: intelligent, powerful and incarnation of authority. But while male characters are interested in how they are, it is what they look like that seems to interest the female characters. Nobody can deny the fact that *Sidi* is presented as a girl gifted with beauty in the play. That is what *Lakunle* resorts to when he refers her to the jewel: '*For that, what is a jewel to pigs?* (p.3). It is upon this metaphorical attribute of which *Sidi* is the carrier that *Lakunle* and *Baroka* have fought all along till the end of the play. *Sidi* is conscious of this attribute ascribed to her. She is the jewel of the village. She is the carrier of the attribute *beautiful*. But what is quite intriguing is the fact that she considers this as something that confers her all the necessary notoriety due to her regard as it is shown below:

15) Third girl: Yes, yes, he did,
But the Bale is still feasting his eyes on the images.
Oh Sidi, he *was* right. You *are* beautiful (p.11).
Sidi: If that *is* true, then I *am* more esteemed than Bale
Baroka the lion of Ilujinle.
This means that I *am* greater than the fox of the
undergrowth (p.11).

To the attribute *beautiful* used by Third girl (a minor character) to describe her, *Sidi* does not complain. She simply draws the conclusion that if it is so, then she is more esteemed and greater than the fox of the undergrowth. As can be seen, it shows how women in the play are more preoccupied by what they look like than by how they are.

The second aspect on which relational processes can contribute to demonstrate how gender is perceived in *The Lion and the Jewel* is "that the male and the female characters may be viewed as stereotypes of two different worlds where man and woman do not get in agreement concerning their opinions. Therefore, they live in constant conflict for not accepting each other's views' (Gallardo, 2006: 755). This is shown in the following excerpt where *Sidi*, *Sadikou* and *Lakunle* seem not to accord their views:

16) Sidi: I suddenly *am* glad to be a woman. We won! We won! Hurray for womankind!
Sadikou: The scarecrow *is* here. Begone fop! This *is* the world of women. At this moment our star sits in the centre of the sky. We *are* supreme… you *are* less than a man.
Lakunle: I will have you know that I *am* a man… (pp. 33-34).

4. Discussion & Conclusion

Wole Soyinka's conception of the world in *The Lion And The Jewel* is to be ascribed to postcolonial literary ideology and therefore any attempt to read it fully should be done through a postcolonial criticism's lens. As might be expected, some may argue that analyzing gender issues in such a play may not be the right thing to do. But any endeavor to critically appreciate a literary work be it of the Nobel Prize (1986) should be encouraged.

Besides, Tyson (2006), in her groundbreaking book on critical analysis of literary fiction sorts out two paradigms strictly tied together and both to postcolonial literature. Those are paradigms of ideology and psychology. 'For most of postcolonial theory's definitive goals', she contends, 'is to combat colonialist ideology by understanding the way in which it operates to form the identity-the psychology-of both the colonizer and the colonized' (p. 433). Indeed *Soyinka* has created his characters to embody the coloniser and the colonized. *Lakunle*, the school teacher, embodies the western tradition in his beliefs, his thinking, and the way he apprehends the world as he overtly goes against African tradition. *Baroka*, *Sidi*, and *Sakikou*, on the other hand, are typical Africans born and educated in a *Yoruba* tradition. It is by analyzing each character's idiolect, the language they use to exchange their world view acquired from experiences that we have come to see a kind of patriarchal ideology behind the play. Male characters concentrate the power and dominate the public space while female ones are confined in the private space (home, marriage).

In fact, *Soyinka* designs his characters in *The Lion and the Jewel* through a direct confrontation between two cultures. He makes them feel, think, act, and express some views which are pertained to his own idiolect and his vision of the African post-colonial society. But in the background of this clash of cultures lies what can be seen as an ideological positioning towards genders' representation. Tyson (2006) strongly advices to make, in a critical work, a connection between 'the psychological, ideological, social, political, intellectual, and aesthetic' (p. 418). To place *The Lion and the Jewel* in that context, we see that all characters are of *Yoruba* origin, that the setting, *Ilujinle*, is a village in *Ibadan Nigeria* that *Soyinka* is from *Yoruba* ethnic group. Also, actions, feelings, utterances of the characters are organized to describe womenfolk as it is in Yoruba traditions. Therefore, we can consider it as a recount of womenfolk in Yoruba tradition: A male-dominated power, then a patriarchy ideology.

However, the play should not be denied the merit to have posed the question of women's representation in Yoruba/African societies. It can therefore be considered a useful tool for the teaching of the mass in projects designed for women empowerment.

The analysis in this article is in relation to male and female representation in *The Lion and the Jewel* from a Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis lens. The transitivity patterns analysis has allowed us to shed light

of how characters construe their experiences through the language they use. The material, mental and relational processes' depiction has helped to reach such an objective. It has been proved that men are represented as dominators of the public space (teacher, chief), capable of concrete tangible actions and women as the goals and/or the beneficiaries of men's actions. Both men and women use mental processes, yet women resort to use it more than men. This can lead to qualify women as emotional beings. In addition, the relational processes analysis indicates that men always view women as an object that they must possess at all cost (the jewel). How they describe others are closely linked to how they describe themselves: intelligent, powerful, and self-confident. While male characters are preoccupied with how they are, female characters insist on what they look like in their use of attributes. Further, the data collected and analyzed in a critical discourse analysis account indicates a construction of an ideological power in social institutions such as family, marriage, chieftaincy in which male are the dominators and women the dominated.

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